E. 2.

THE DESCENT UPON FRANCE CONSIDERED;

In a LETTER to a Member of *PARLIAMENT.*

BIBLIOTHECA REGIA

SIR,

I Have read and considered the Project of a Descent upon *France*: and have likewise considered the Descents, that have been since designed. But, in my apprehension, the Descents lately Designed, are very different from that which was Projected.

2.

The Business of the Descent Projected is, to have a good Body of Foot, (which should be about twenty thousand), to be put on Board, and to carry on a Desultory Sea-War. Or in other words, to have a Naval Army for the infesting of the *French* Coasts. These may Land, as they see Occasion, upon any part of *France* that lies towards our Seas. Not to burn and ravage,(for That will signifie little), but to seize some weak Port or Creek, or any commodious Place they can take by Storm; and to fortifie it with a large and strong Intrenchment. which may contain the whole twenty thousand and more, but will be full mann'd with ten thousand.

The Project ſuppoſes, that we ſhall certainly be able to force our Landing in ſome Place or other. It ſuppoſes alſo, that ſuch a Body of Men, having the Sea and a Fleet behind them, may ſo intrench themſelves, as to defie any Force that can be brought againſt them. A ſmall Force cannot look upon them: and a great Force will be ſo long drawing together, that our Men will have the more time to fortifie. Alſo the Project ſuppoſes, that ſuch a Place, having in it a Garriſon of ten thouſand Men (whereof 1000, or 1500, to be Horſe and Dragoons) will maintain it ſelf by the Contribution it Commands: ſo that it will be no Charge to *England*. And the Men for this Garriſon may be had at very ſhort warning: a Footing in *France* being a moſt powerful Invitation. Which Garriſon when it is compleat, Our whole Naval Army may ſet ſail, to ſeize and fortifie ſome other Place. And ſo on to another and another.

The Author of the Project doth not think it neceſſary (tho it is confeſs'd it would be highly convenient) that theſe Places ſhould have good Ports. Judging it ſufficient, if they can receive and ſecure ſmall Veſſels; being relievable by Sea, and not commanded by Land. Such a Place being very well fortified, he ſays would be as good as *Calice:* which we know is greatly conſiderable, tho it have a very mean Harbour. And I add, that any Footing in *France* would be worth a Million. Alſo I add further, That if no Port of any kind be to be had, we may fortifie upon a Bay. and it is well known to Seamen, which are the moſt commodious Bays of *France* upon theſe Seas.

I have given you this ſhort account of the *Projected Deſcent*. He that would have it at large, with the Reaſons for it, and the Advantages propoſed by it, may (if he pleaſe) have recourſe to the Book it ſelf: which was Printed in the beginning of Ninety one, and is ſince Reprinted.

BUT THE DESCENTS that have been deſigned theſe two laſt Years, ſeem to be of another Nature. For in all Appearance, they were not for the Making, but the Taking of ſtrong Places. And accordingly they had compleat Trains of Braſs Artillery: with all other things fit for Sieges. Whereas to the Fortifying Project, there is only required good ſtore of Iron Guns: which upon Ramparts are as good or better than thoſe of Braſs. According to the Informations we had, the firſt of theſe Deſcents was to be carried on by about twelve thouſand Foot, and one thouſand Horſe and Dragoons

Dragoons. But a much greater Force was intended for the ſecond; that is, thirty thouſand Foot, and of Horſe and Dragoons ſeveral thouſands: being near forty thouſand in all.

I ſhall not preſume to determine, which of theſe two ways is beſt: whether the Attacquing ſtrong Places, or the making weak Places ſtrong. For tho I can comprehend the Fortifying Project, it being eaſie and obvious; yet the Deſign of Attacquing is beyond my Reach: and may have much better Reaſons for it, than I underſtand or can imagine. However this ſeems clear; that in the Attacquing Deſign there is Difficulty and Danger, but in Fortifying there is only Labour. Of which we muſt not be ſparing, if we mean to pull down this *French King*.

If therefore there muſt any thing of this kind be done next Year, (and ſomething of this kind muſt be done, or we are ruin'd); I ſhould humbly adviſe the way of Seizing and Fortifying, as the ſafe and ſure Way. And tho it be long, tho it be laborious, tho it may ſeem ignoble; yet we may take it with all its Faults, if it will ſufficiently ruine the *French King*. Which it cannot fail to do, if it be well followed.

When I admit this way to be long, it is with reſpect to the ultimate End it propoſes: which is, The getting a Range of Garriſons upon the *French* Coaſt, the whole length of the Channel. And this is a Work of ſome time. But we ſhall ſoon find a good Effect of this Enterprize. For a few ſuch Garriſons, (as many as may be had in one Summer), muſt exceedingly diſtract and confound the *French*; and make them draw much of their Force from *Flanders* and *Germany*. theſe Garriſons being back'd by our Naval Army, and by all the Forces we have in *England*. Alſo this way is long, in compariſon of a Voyage Royal: which I confeſs would make quicker Work. But ſuch a Voyage ſeems not convenient at this time.

I know a Voyage Royal hath been recommended, as the beſt Way of all other. But it was at a time, when the Confederates were ſuperiour in Strength. Alſo it was upon a ſuppoſition that the War of *Ireland* were over. But this War hath not been ended ſo ſoon as it might have been: (for which, and conſequently for all our Diſtreſſes, we may thank the *Iriſh Proteſtants*; who being governed by their Revenge and other Paſſions, would not endure that any tolerable Conditions ſhould be given to their Enemies): by which means the *French* have gotten ſuch Advantages, that they

are now too ſtrong for us. So that the ſtate of Affairs being ſo much alter'd, we muſt likewiſe alter our Meaſures.

There is this difference between a Voyage Royal, and the Deſcent Projected. By a Voyage Royal, or a main Invaſion, we might more readily ſubdue the *French*, in caſe We with our Confederates were the ſtronger. But by the Deſcent Projected, or a deſultory Sea War, (or a Coaſt War, as it hath been called in ſome Debates of Parliament); They that are Maſters at Sea (as we muſt be, or I have ſaid nothingall this while); may worſt an Enemy much ſtronger at Land than themſelves, and may grow upon him; no Force or Conduct being able to withſtand it.

THE DESCENT intended this laſt Summer, was not in truth a Deſcent, as we commonly underſtand the Word, but a main Invaſion; and would have wanted nothing but the King's Preſence, to make it a Voyage Royal. We muſt preſume that it was well deſign'd, tho it ſuffered a diſappointment: nor am I minded to look back. Rather, if you pleaſe, let us weigh and conſider what is beſt for the future. That is, ſince a Deſcent muſt be (there being no other way to preſerve us); whether we ſhould make this Deſcent with a compleat Army of forty thouſand Combatants Horſe, Foot and Dragoons; or with a good Body of 20000. Foot.

And in the firſt place it is confeſs'd, that if this compleat Army could be had with a Wiſh, we might probably Wiſh for the compleat Army. But when we conſider what the Charge of it will be, and how hardly this Force can be ſpared from other Places, we may be of another Mind. So that the other Way ſeems more inviting, in regard it may be compaſſed much eaſier, and will coſt much leſs.

In the ſecond place, when this compleat Army is once landed, they muſt there abide and take their Fortune: there is then no fear of them any where elſe. Such Numbers, with their great Equipage, and ſo many thouſand Horſes, are too unwieldy to be carried to and fro by Sea, upon every Occaſion: and a monſtrous Fleet muſt attend them for that purpoſe. But a Body of Foot is a thing portable: and can readily Land, and upon Occaſion as readily Reimbark and ſeek new Adventures. So that being always Moving, or in a readineſs to Move; they will keep the whole Coaſt in a high and continual Alarm.

In the third place, Since our Compleat Army muſt take their Fortune in the place where they firſt Land; let us ſee what their Fortune

tune is like to be. 'Tis probable that for a while they will be Maſters of the Field: and conſequently they may Attacque ſome ſtrong Place. But there is great reaſon to fear, that before they have taken it the *French* will be upon them. And if they over-power us, all our Labour is loſt; beſide the danger of being routed and deſtroyed. But a Body of Foot that only minds Fortifying, runs no ſuch Hazards. For there is no likelihood, (if they work with Diligence, and get Guns enow mounted) that the Enemy ſhould be able to force their Intrenchments.

In the fourth place I affirm, that a compleat Army of forty thouſand Men, being landed in *Normandy* or *Bretagne*; can do no more Hurt to the *French* King, nor to the Confederates more Good, than the like Army ſent to *Flanders*. Suppoſe he deſigns to invade *Flanders* with a hundred and twenty thouſand Men: and ſuppoſe the Confederates deſign a hundred thouſand to defend it, whereof Our *Quota* is to be forty thouſand. But we chuſe rather to fall into *Bretagne* with our whole *Quota*: thereby to oblige the *French* to draw off the like Number to oppoſe our Invaſion. And then the *French* will have fourſcore thouſand in *Flanders*; and the Confederates, threeſcore. So that all our Cunning will come to this; that We ſhall divide Our Enemies Forces, by dividing our own. But the *French* will ſtill be ſuperiour in *Flanders* by twenty thouſand Men; and our Invaſion in *Britain*, being oppoſed by equal Force, can come to nothing.

But in the fifth place it will not hold, That our invading *Britain* with forty thouſand Men, muſt cauſe the *French* to draw or keep back as great a Force from *Flanders*. For twenty thouſand of their regular Troops, aſſiſted by the *Militia's* of *Britain* and the neighbouring Provinces, will I doubt be found ſufficient to oppoſe our Invaſion. So that this Invaſion, inſtead of weakning the *French*, will give them a further Advantage. For now (according to the Suppoſitions before made) they will have a hundred thouſand Men in *Flanders*, againſt threeſcore thouſand of the Confederates. Alſo by this means they will exert more of their Force againſt us: their *Militia* Troops being now employed, which would otherwiſe ly idle. 'Tis true, this will be a great Burden to their People; but their People muſt and will bear it.

Let us now ſee, whether the Fortifying Project be ſubject to theſe Evils. And any one that will conſider, may ſee plainly it is not. It takes up but twenty thouſand Foot: the reſt of our Foot,

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and all our Horſe and Dragoons, being to be employed elſewhere. Twenty thouſand on Shipboard will do more Service, both to our ſelves and to the Common Cauſe, then a far greater Number in *Flanders*. For a far greater Force muſt be brought to oppoſe them: tho all will be too little, to oppoſe a Deſcent of this Nature. It is a *Flaile*, againſt which there is no *Fence*.

AND NOW, *Sir*, my requeſt to you is, That you will do your beſt Endeavour in your Station, that this Deſign be effectually proſecuted. For the Good of *England*, and of *Europe*; both which are now upon the Brink of Deſtruction. 'Tis this that muſt put a Hook, in the *French* King's Noſe. We muſt therefore carry on this Deſcent in the firſt place: ſparing to our Allies all the further Force we can raiſe. And the Men that are for this Service, muſt not be expected from far Countries, but ſhould ly Quartered near the Sea Shore, ready to imbark upon the firſt Orders; the Ships that muſt Tranſport them being alſo ready.

I ſhall offer one thing more, which is; That beſide our Naval Army, there be a Reſerve of ten thouſand kept aſhor in *England*, (whereof at leaſt one thouſand ſhould be Horſe), to Mann the firſt Garriſon we ſhall make. With a Fund to raiſe more, when there ſhall be like further Occaſions. You may rely upon it, that if we have but Money, we ſhall never want Men, to make good our Footing in *France*. And I muſt ſay once more; *Any Footing in* France *would be worth a Million.*

Your moſt humble Servant

E. L.

POST-

POST-SCRIPT.

THere have been mentioned two ſorts of Deſcents; the one for Taking, the other for Making ſtrong Places. But beſide theſe there is a third Sort: which is for deſtroying the open Country. And this is the thing, which ſome underſtand by a Coaſt War. Wherein their meaning is, that our Fleet (without the help of Land-Forces on board) ſhould be moving on the *French* Coaſt, and putting Men aſhore as there is occaſion: who muſt make all the havock they can, by Spoiling and Burning.

But this is ignoble with a witneſs: and little better than barbarous. And I would not have us the Beginners of foul War: nor to fall a deſtroying without provocation. But to ſettle ſtrong Garriſons, and command Contributions, (which the Fortifying Project will do), with Military Execution for non-payment; theſe are things uſual, and will not be accounted *foul*.

Beſide we muſt conſider, that the Sea Coaſt of *France* is for the moſt part barren and miſerably poor; and our Deſtroyers, being all of them Foot, will be able to reach nothing but the meer Sea Coaſt: ſo that they cannot get much Good, nor do much Harm. And moreover, a few Troops of Horſe will chaſe them and cut them off.

We muſt conſider further, That if we make foul Work, the Enemy may find times to retaliate, and to meaſure back to *England* the ſame Severities. Our Coaſt is bolder, and leſs fortified, and richer. Wherefore upon the whole matter we may conclude, That ſuch a Deſcent as this, will be of no avail to us.

MANY there are that would have no Deſcent at all: nor any Land Forces, beſide thoſe that muſt Guard *England*. Thinking that We, being an Iſland, ſhould mind nothing but our Fleet. Here I muſt confeſs, that our Fleet ought to be our principal Care. But if the while we neglect our Confederates, and ſuffer them to be ruined; we muſt be ruined our ſelves. If the *French* get *Flanders*, *Holland* muſt ſoon follow: with all the *German* Countries upon the *Rhine*. And then, whoever is King of *England*, we ſhall be in the *French* King's Power. Nay tho we were under that Form of Government which *Mazarine* moſt dreaded, and tho the whole Nation

ſhould

ſhould be united as one Man; yet the *French*, in theſe their high Circumſtances, would be too hard for us.

[Here by the way, I think the Cardinal, (whoſe Letters are made Engliſh and here Printed), is a little extravagant. For he ſays that *England* would be at leaſt ten times ſtronger in a Republique, than under a King. If he had ſaid, we ſhould be twice or thrice as ſtrong, it had been ſomething like.]

I know there are ſome that deſpiſe this danger from the *French*: and will maintain; that tho they ſhould be grown never ſo great, yet in a War at Sea we ſhould be able to Cope with them. Which is a dangerous Miſtake. Perhaps we may advance two or three Millions yearly towards this Sea War. But if the *French* can advance thrice as much, we are ſure to be beaten. there being nothing more certain, than that in a War at Sea, ſeven or eight Millions will beat two or three Millions. And we muſt not think, that when we are Attacqued by a treble Force, the Odds or Hazard is but three to one againſt us. For where things are carried by Strength, three to one in the *Match*, is a thouſand to one in the *Bett*.

We muſt therefore do our utmoſt for the defence of *Flanders*: aſſiſting it with all the Force we can make, after our own neceſſary occaſions are provided for. And I think the Deſcent here recommended will give them more effectual Aſſiſtance, than any thing elſe we can do.

Such another Campagne as this laſt, (and in the ordinary way we can hardly hope for better), will make our Condition ruinous. We ſhall then have a dreadful Proſpect, of Univerſal Monarchy and Univerſal Slavery. Nothing in probability can preſerve us, (as you have been told formerly), but ſuch a Deſcent as is propoſed: and ſuch a Deſcent will probably preſerve us. This Deſcent, 'tis confeſs'd, will coſt ſome Money; but it will carry no Money out of the Kingdom.

FINIS.

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